

Public Library Report

To the board of trustees of the Free Library, Ames, Iowa.

In submitting the first annual report for the year ending Dec. 31, 1904 it is well to call your attention to you of the salient features of the work.

There have been 1435 books accessioned, only 524 of which have been purchased. The library has been the recipient of many valuable gifts in the way of books. First must be mentioned the 500 well selected volumes from the old library, also Mrs. A. H. McFarlanes gift of complete sets of Scott and Dickens and 16 bound volumes of Harpers magazine. Mrs. Mary Little presented a rare old English book published in 1753; a good edition of Chamber's encyclopedia came from Mrs. Ruth Cook, collections have been turned into the public library by the P. E. O. society, the Nonpareil club and the Christian church. Besides ~~many~~ other donations have been made.

The library subscribes for 22 periodicals and a number of others have been donated. Most useful of these donations is the Harper's Weekly which is invaluable in connection with our bulletin screen. These pictures, in a most attractive way present the world's important events and preserve a vivid record of its progress.

It is gratifying to see the extent to which the library has been used in the 58 days it has been open to the public. 568 reader's cards have been issued, 219 of which are used by school children

under 15 years of age.

circulation has amounted to a daily average of 48 volumes. 71% has been in fiction.

In fiction the books on travel have been most popular, with biography and biography close seconds. The most popular books in the general collection have been Jack London's "Call of the Wild" and Dixon's "Leopard's Spots." Among juvenile readers Schwatka's "Children of the Cold," and Seton-Thompson's animal stories have been most called for.

The average number of visitors to the library has been 74. The busiest time at the loan desk is from 4 to 5 p. m. Many remain to read at this time but it is in the evening that the reading room is most used, chiefly by boys of about high school age.

There is much disappointment expressed that current magazines cannot be circulated. Since these when bound furnish invaluable reference material it is impracticable to circulate the magazines except such as are in duplicate. Hampered by lack of funds the book committee is unable to meet this difficulty, but a number of persons are very generously turning in their current magazines as soon as they are read at home. Without doubt many others would gladly do this also if the need for such material in holding the younger readers were fully understood.

The necessity of buying representative books in the different classes of literature in order to have a well balanced library does not allow your book committee to purchase as much of the new fiction as is desired. It is their policy, however, to buy a few of the best in this class each year. It may be possible to furnish such material from some other source but through the medium of this library if present plans materialize.

The library is ready to aid clubs, young peoples societies, mission study classes, etc, by buying as far as the funds permit, the books required for their work, to give guidance in their use and when such help is especially requested to prepare reading lists showing all the books in the library relating to the subject under investigation. The library already has a valuable working collection of books helpful along these lines. If such bodies will co-operate with us by filing the programs and by giving notice early of such reference lists as are desired, these will be forthcoming at the time when they are needed.

Ames (Iowa) - Free Library.

Ames Intelligence
16 Feb. 05.

